

All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

If stupidity was a virtue

My youngest daughter, who has studied archaeology, told me last year (or so) that the human population was due for a collapse. Her position was sound based on historical precedent, but the counter-argument I put up, based on a perspective I have heard from others, was that scientific advances will counter carrying capacity limitations, and move us forward without mass human extinctions.

The problem, however, is that people are stupid. It is not ignorance, because they have been told again and again, and the evidence is obvious enough if you simply look at what's in front of you. And yet, we have eyes but we do not see, we have brains but we do not think, and we have ears but we refuse to listen. This is not a narrow problem with humanity. It is vast, and exploited by people who don't care about other people, for personal advantage.

- **Cyber security:** I am an actual expert in this area and I am constantly appalled by the ignorance and lack of reasonable and prudent behavior by people in charge across the spectrum. We hear year after year about worse and worse incidents where more and more value is lost and consequences pile up, and still we don't even do the minimal version of change control, even for critical government systems, even though the US apparently spends hundreds of billions of dollars on the NSA to, among other things, help defend those very systems.
- **Ecology and the planet:** Waters are rising, weather is going wacko with worse storms, heat waves, mass extinctions, plastic and mercury is in the fish we try to eat, we measure temperatures and hit "hundred year" floods and heat waves every year. And yet we act as if it's someone else's problem, continue to create and use more plastic than ever, especially in organic foods, ignore the loss of species, and allow governments to allow their people to destroy the rain forests that generate the air we breathe.
- **Wearing a mask:** Somehow, after a year of a pandemic, more people are all of a sudden revolting against wearing a mask, claiming somehow that it is an abridgment of their freedom. Of course telling them that they cannot kill other people is restricting their freedom, and by that logic, it makes perfect sense that, in self defense, we can kill people not wearing masks, which is apparently part of the threat to life that in Florida would allow me to not back down and use deadly force against the non-mask wearer. But perhaps more importantly, apparently something like 1/3 of the mask wearers don't cover both their mouth and nose! Are we so stupid and inept that we cannot devise a mask that doesn't keep falling off your nose when you speak? Apparently – we are.
- **Conspiracy theories and rational thought:** At this point, almost any insane thing put in front of enough people with political push behind it will be picked up by millions and sustained and grown. After all, it was on a computer, so it must be true... this is what people got wrong 30 years ago... and still apparently today. But it is augmented by professional liars who take advantage by selling tee shirts and taking donations and using it to gain and maintain power.

- **Science denial:** The general notion that science is lies couched in fancy words by people who only want more money is put forth by people who use lies couched in plain words by people who only want more money. Unless you have some real background in this stuff, you cannot tell a lie from the truth, but even if you could, the liars just call others liars and turn it into kindergarten. They pre-load all the answers and use the things that would be said against them if we were all truthful, in advance, against the people telling the truth. All to take advantage of others. And the fools among us (read at least 35% of us and more likely 75%) cannot tell truth from lies, and believe the ones who sound more like them. And the scientists are brought up to not sound like them, so guess what...
- **Fact vs. Fiction:** There's a way to tell fact from fiction. It's called evidence and ground truth, and witnesses who swear under penalty of perjury and years in jail, and standards of expertise used by the courts (knowledge, skills, training, education, and experience), combined with providing the basis for claims and logical explanations of how you come to conclusions, and opposition experts who can disagree if you get anything wrong. The judges allow (or not) evidence based on whether it is more probative than prejudicial. And they don't get it right every time, but they do a pretty darned good job of it compared to the folks who just make it sound good in front of a media anxious for things that get eyeballs in front of advertisements for a living. However, we don't generally do this except in legal matters which cost a lot to go through. Mostly, people just believe almost anything if they feel like they want to, and others around them seem to believe it too. After all, fiction is fun! But if you start to mix it up with fact, you might end up dead, like so many have recently, because they believed the lies about COVID instead of listening to the scientists.
- **Investment decisions:** Most investors in my experience apparently follow other investors, over a cliff or not, without undertaking reasonable and prudent diligence on the companies or people they send money to. I know quite a bit about this as well, because I run investment forums every month and have for the last 6 years give or take. And I do due diligence reviews and find inconsistencies, ridiculous claims, and all manner of other things that help me shy away from lots of apparently bad deals. But I also help the companies get to where they can properly explain what they are doing in terms others can understand, and backed up with facts and analysis that rings true because it has a basis in truth and fact. A fool and their money are soon parted. But plenty of smart people don't have enough money to invest, so they are dealt out of competing by rules that favor the rich. And when the less rich folks gang up on the rich folks, trading will be stopped and the rich folks will find a way to keep the poor folks from making too much out of it.

Conclusions

What's the point of all this? Lots of people, all over the world, treat stupidity as a virtue. They think ignorance is bliss. And there are enough of them out there being taken advantage of to kill a lot of the rest of us who just want to earn an honest living and live well.

I am an optimist and believe the world is getting better, but I think there is a limit to how much stupidity we can take before we go from the age of enlightenment to the dark ages. I just hope that people start listening to honest sincere people who check things out. But I doubt it.